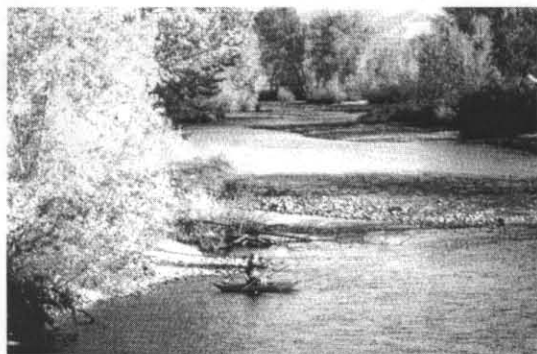


CHAPTER 4

Recreation Supply and Demand

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AREA MARKET BREAKDOWN

In 1999, the park hosted about 71,600 visitors. The total includes approximately 3,000 people who attended a regional high school cross-country meet in the fall after the regular park season.

During the 1999 season, 71 visitors completed day use surveys. The 1999 visitors who completed surveys predominantly were from Ada and Canyon Counties, with only two of the respondents from out-of-state. Based on the visitor surveys, 43 percent were from Boise; 14 percent were from Meridian; 13 percent were from Eagle; and 12 percent were from Nampa; 6 percent were from Kuna; 5 percent were from Caldwell; 5 percent were from Middleton; 5 percent were from Homedale; and 1 percent were from out-of-state.

12 percent were from Nampa. Kuna residents accounted for 6 percent of the completed surveys with Caldwell, Middleton and Homedale residents accounting for less than 5 percent each. The two out-of-state visitors who completed surveys were from Arizona and Minnesota. A copy of the survey is in Appendix 7.

AREA POPULATION AND GROWTH PROJECTIONS

The population of the State of Idaho has increased steadily, and above the national average, during the decade of the 1990s.

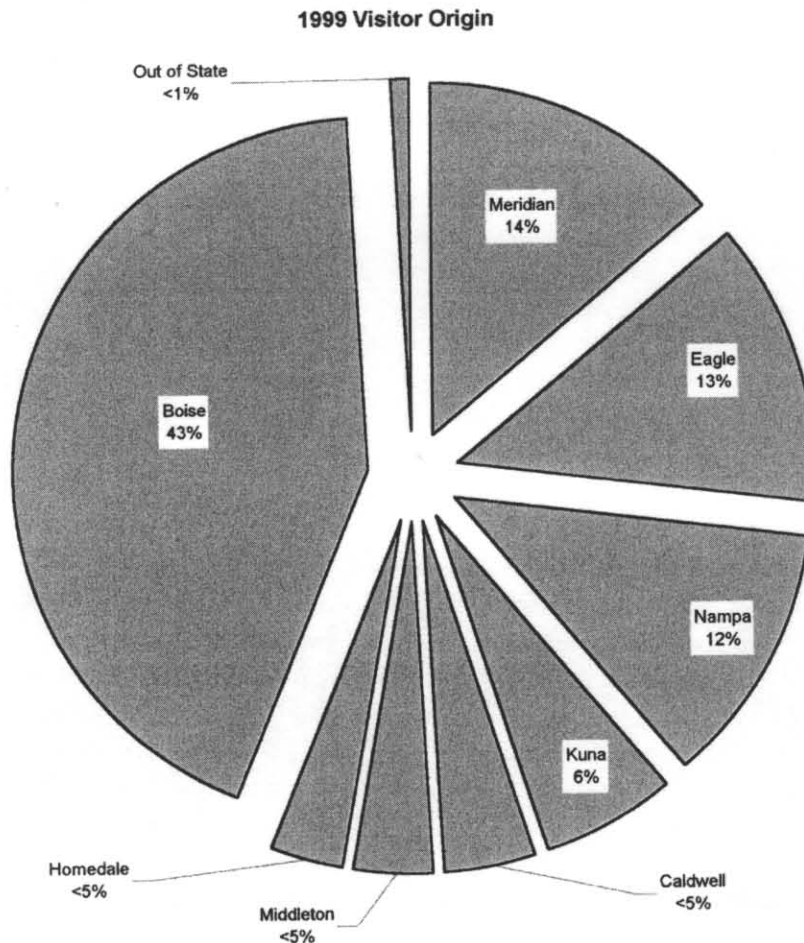


Fig. 4.1



Statewide, population has increased an average 2.6 percent a year from 1990 through 1997. For the next five years, the statewide population growth rate is expected to be at a slower pace, but still with an upward trend (Idaho Power, 1999). The population growth in southwestern Idaho, espe-

the demand on local resources (APA, 1999 online).

There is not a direct correlation between area population growth and visitation at Eagle Island State Park. However, the trends are both in the same upward direction. Several times in the past 10 years, the

Historical Population of Ada and Canyon Counties

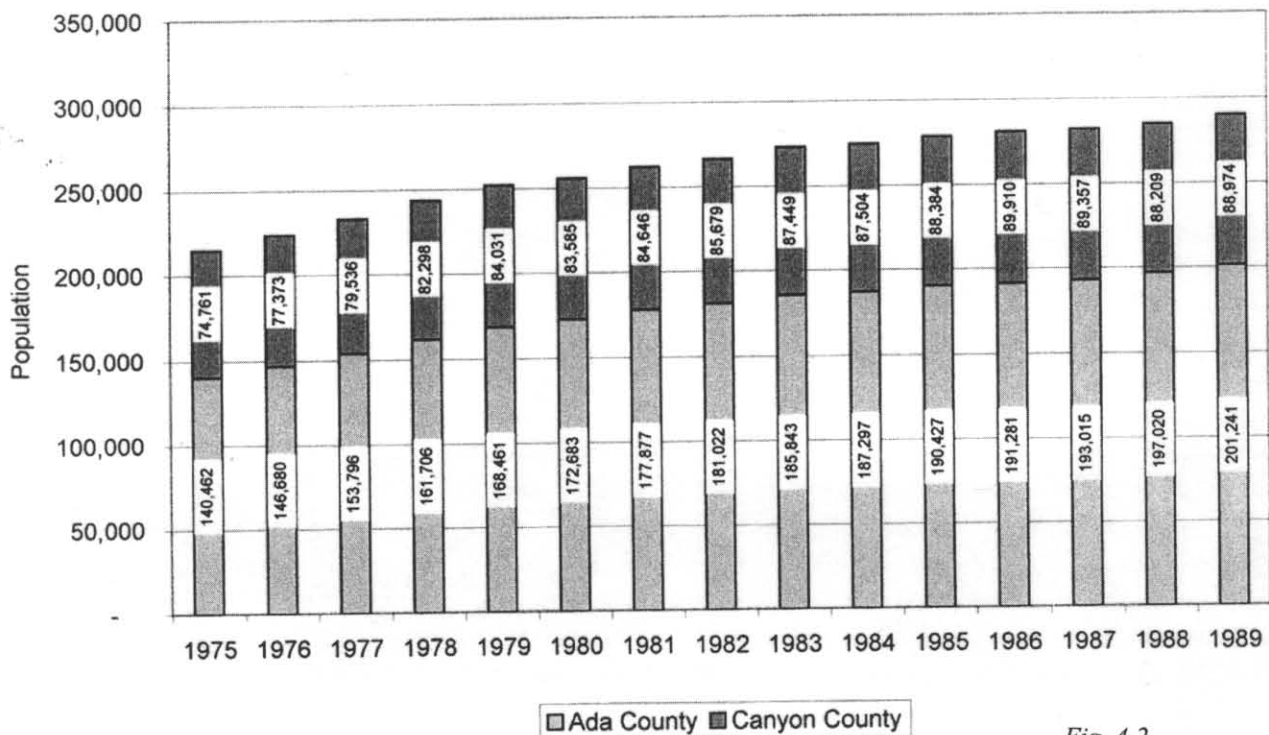


Fig. 4.2

cially Ada and Canyon Counties, has been dramatic and is having an effect on services, roads, infrastructure and recreational opportunities and places, such as Eagle Island State Park. The historic population growth graph depicts the population gain in numbers of people each year from 1975 through 1990.

The population of the local community of Eagle has tripled since 1980, from a rural agricultural village of 2,260 to approximately 10,300 in 1998. The population is forecasted to reach 14,610 in 2020, continuing

park gate has been closed when the swimming and parking areas have reached capacity.

Park staff have observed resource damage from soil compaction and continuous use of grassy areas by the high number of users. The park's structures, such as restrooms, are showing signs of age and heavy use. Continued increase in use of the existing developed area will result in more closures and more resource damage and higher maintenance costs.



Ada & Canyon County Population

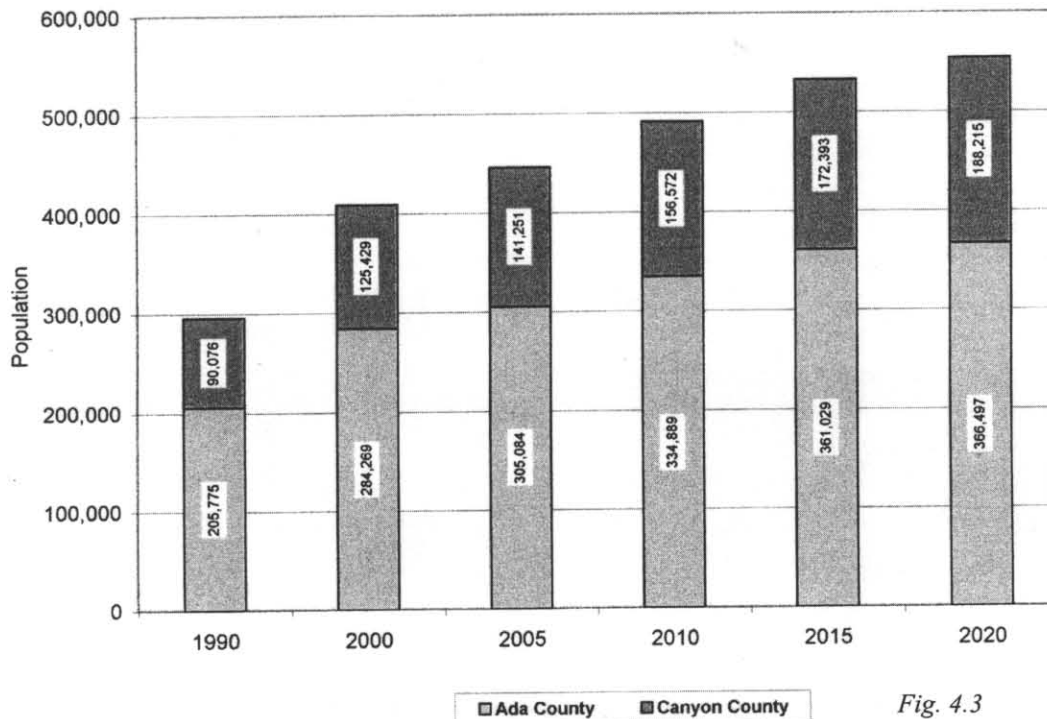


Fig. 4.3

OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

National legislation passed in 1965 requires that each state prepare long-range outdoor recreation plans. In Idaho, the document is known as the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan (SCORTP). Idaho's plans have had substantial effects on recreation and tourism policies in the state.

The most recent edition, published in July 1998, identifies existing resources and systems, general outdoor recreation and tourism participation patterns and trends, issues and problems, and recommends strategic solutions to these problems. The SCORTP is not a site specific detailing of facts and data. Local and regional planning, research and cooperation are strongly recommended in order to satisfy the outdoor recreation and tourism needs of Idaho.

Idaho has been divided into seven travel planning regions to assist with the planning, funding, management and administration of recreation and tourism resources. Each travel region is identified with characteristics such as terrain or population that make its resources, needs and potential unique. Eagle Island State Park is in Region 3, consisting of 11 southwestern counties. The region is dominated by the Boise economy and is home to more than a third of the state's population.

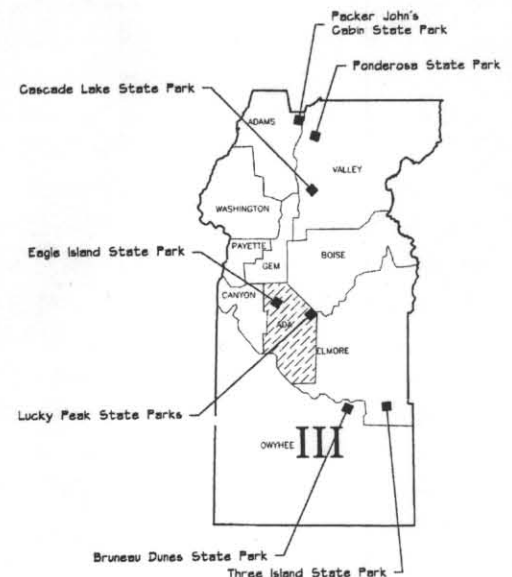


Fig. 4.4



**Annual In-Community Outdoor Activity Participation
Region 3**

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Walking	52
Sports	22
Exercise	19
Attending festivals, events, culture	16
Biking	14
Other recreation	14
Golf	12
Running	11
Swimming in pools	9
Tennis	5
Picnic, BBQ	3
Skiing, alpine	3
Boating	3
Motorized recreation	3
Fishing	2
Sightseeing	2
Snowmobiling	2
Snow play	2
Swimming in lakes	2
Camping, auto	1
Gardening	1
Hunting	1
Skiing, cross-country	1

Table 4.1

The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan's (1998) unit of analysis is the region, in terms of activity participation, facility use and other recreation planning variables. Table 4.1 shows generally how people in Region 3 spend their leisure time in their communities. Table 4.2 shows the out-of-community outdoor recreation participation of all Idahoans statewide.

In a series of meetings held around the state in 1992 - 1993, residents' attitudes about, and requests for recreation opportunities were documented by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation and used in the SCORTP. Trail needs predominated

as the principal topic of discussion during all the meetings. One theme raised consistently is that more foot and horse trails are needed near and in urban areas.

The SCORTP states that trail mileage in southern Idaho has decreased, while trail mileage in northern Idaho has increased. It pointed out the demand for more recreational trail opportunities closer to home.

The conclusion in the SCORTP about trail capacity is that, "The need for city and rural trails is evident. Developed trails like the Boise Greenbelt, Lewiston Levee Trail System and the Wood River Trail System are becoming overcrowded. Throughout Idaho, many residents want trails located closer to home."

Other recreation needs and issues were highlighted in the SCORTP, but the need for trails is the most pertinent item from the statewide document, which is likely to be addressed at Eagle Island State Park.

AREA RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

There are many recreation opportunities on public and private lands throughout southwestern Idaho. The most readily available comprehensive source of places and activities is the Southwest Idaho Visitor Guide published approximately annually for the Southwest Idaho Travel Association. The most recent edition was published in 1999.

The attractions cover a broad range of recreational activities and sites, most of them outdoor recreation oriented. Although the visitor guide is the most comprehensive



source of local recreation sites and events, the entries are included on a volunteer basis. A number of attractions, for which information was not supplied to the publisher and newly built attractions, are not included. There are 30 attractions listed for the Boise metropolitan area. Eagle Island and Lucky Peak are the two state park units included in the Boise metropolitan area guide to places and events. These are some of the attractions listed in the 1999 visitor guide.

Basque Museum and Cultural Center – Exhibits feature Basque traditions, artifacts and culture.

Bogus Basin Ski Resort – 2,600 acres of ski terrain just 16 miles north of Boise.

Boise Greenbelt – More than 25 miles of paved paths follow the Boise River through the heart of the city and to Lucky Peak reservoir east of the city.

Barber Park – The major put-in place for summer raft and tube trips on the Boise River.

Boise City Parks: Ann Morrison Park – Boise's largest park with athletic fields, lighted fountain, picnic areas, paths and playgrounds; Julia Davis Park, a 90-acre park with picnic areas, playgrounds, tennis courts, horseshoe pits, boat rentals and a refurbished band shell; Kathryn Albertson Park, a passive botanical and wildlife park; and Veterans Memorial Park, formerly a state park currently managed by the City of Boise.

Boise River – The Boise River is a total recreation resource running through the valley. It supports fishing, boating, tubing, wildlife habitat and viewing and a Greenbelt path.

Boise River Tours – Educational and recreational river rafting.

Idaho Black History Museum – A showplace of historical photos, crafts and other artifacts reflecting black culture in Idaho's diverse heritage.

Idaho Botanical Garden – Display gar-

dens, paths and nearby trails.

Idaho Historical Museum – Permanent exhibits of Idaho's past as well as changing exhibits.

Annual Out-of-Community Outdoor Activity Participation Statewide

Activity	Percentage
Travel home	16
Attending festivals, events, culture	8
Fishing	8
Sightseeing	7
Sports	7
Camping, auto	4
Hunting	4
Skiing, alpine	4
Other recreation	4
Boating	3
Golf	3
Walking	3
Picnic, BBQ	2
Snowmobiling	2
Swimming	2
Biking	1
Camping, backcountry	1
Skiing, cross-country	1
Motorized recreation	1
Snow play	<1

Table 4.2

Idaho Ice World – Public ice skating sessions daily.

Idaho State Capitol – A replica of our nation's capitol, this is the only statehouse in America with geothermal heating.

Lucky Peak State Park – 10 miles east of Boise, a perfect place for fishing, water skiing, sailing and swimming.

M-K Nature Center – An indoor/outdoor facility featuring the life of a mountain stream with underwater viewing.

Old Idaho Penitentiary – A former ter-



ritorial and state prison with self-guided tours of Death Row, cell houses and exhibits on early prisons and prison life.

World Center for Birds of Prey – This renowned facility gives visitors insights into the working process of saving endangered species of hawks, falcons, eagles and other birds of prey.

Zoo Boise – Located in Julia Davis Park, the zoo houses Idaho's big game animals and exotic creatures from around the world.

Golfing is a popular activity in the Boise Valley and in Region 3 according to the SCORTP. The visitor guide lists 26 golf courses in the Region 3 area. A recent newspaper article featured brief descriptions of 18 courses open to the public in the Boise metropolitan area (Idaho Statesman, April 2, 2000). While all the courses listed are

Trails are not included in the visitor guide. A Ridge to Rivers Trail Map is available at sporting goods and outdoor gear stores. The Ridge to Rivers Trail System in Ada County and Boise City is meeting some of the trail needs in the Boise Metropolitan area. The map is based on the Ridge to Rivers Plan, which lays out a pathway system throughout Ada County. A bikeway along Eagle Road and a multi-use pathway along Highway 44 from Eagle to Ballantyne Roads have been built in response to this plan.

The Foundation for Ada County Trails System is a non-profit organization that is working to secure trail easements along the Boise River outside the City of Boise to Canyon County and to connect to other trails in the region. The Greenbelt through Boise is heavily used by walkers, joggers, in-line skaters, and cyclists. Horses and motorized vehicles are excluded from the Greenbelt. No exact use figures are available, but use is heavy enough that there are areas of congestion causing safety concerns.

When the water slide was opened at Eagle Island State Park, it was one of the first in the area. Now, several Boise City Park swimming pools have water slides. Roaring Springs, a large, privately owned water park only miles from Eagle Island State Park, opened in 1999. It is unknown whether the opening of Roaring Springs Water Park contributed to the decline in the number of visitors to Eagle Island State Park in the 1999 season.

New parks are being developed by local governments in the Eagle area. The Ada-Eagle Community Park east of the city is partially constructed. When fully developed, it is designed to contain a skateboard park, seasonal pond with secure dog area, and playing fields.



Tubers floating down the Boise River.

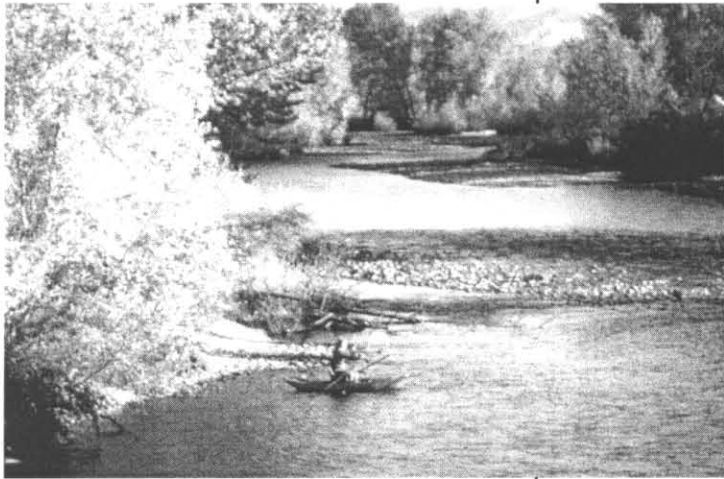
open to the public, only a few of the courses are publicly owned.

Camping in Region 3 is varied. There are campgrounds on public lands in the region, which are listed in agency publications. There is more limited camping available in the Boise Metropolitan area. The visitor guide lists ten recreational vehicle parks and campgrounds in Boise, Meridian, Nampa and Caldwell.



Recreational Use of the Boise River

A prime asset of Eagle Island State Park



Boating on the Boise River.

is its extensive shoreline along the Boise River. Currently, there is no access to the river for park users. However, the Boise River, as a recreational resource, has the potential to satisfy many water related recreational opportunities. Swimming, fishing, and tubing appear to be the most popular recreational activities on the Boise River. Canoeing is becoming more popular, with a guide now available to alert canoeists to required portages, preferred portage routes, and river access points (Chelstrom, 1999). Kayaking is a seasonal activity on the Boise River, coinciding with higher flows. Most kayaking occurs at play waves created by diversion structures. The Boise River is used for teaching beginning kayakers. Whitewater rafting is not a principle recreational use of the river. One rafting company is offering educational and recreational group trips on the Boise River approximately between Boise and Eagle Island.

Tubing seems to be the most popular river use during summer months. Most tubing occurs between Barber Park and at Ann Morrison Parks through the eastern end of Boise. The diversion dams at Ann Morrison

Park and at Veterans Memorial Park are extremely hazardous to tubers, kayakers, swimmers and rafters. From the Farmers Union Canal at Veterans Memorial Park downstream to the diversion dam on the North Channel of the Boise River at Eagle Island, the river has no major obstacles. There is the potential to tube the river between these two points, but public access is limited and further studies are needed to determine its feasibility.

CURRENT PARK VISITOR PROFILE

A park visitor survey was distributed to visitors at Eagle Island State Park during the 1999 season. Copies of the blank survey and total survey results are included in Appendices 7 and 8. Park staff handed out surveys as visitors entered the park. Surveys were distributed on selected days of the week and through the season according to a plan to sample day use visitors system-wide. The 1999 day use survey was the first one administered at Eagle Island State Park.

Seventy-one visitors returned completed surveys. From these survey respondents, a park visitor profile can begin to be developed. More than 90 percent of the survey respondents were from Ada and Canyon Counties. Only two respondents were from other states. More than half said they learned about the park from a friend or relative and close to 30 percent said they live nearby. About 4 percent said they learned of the park from a highway sign; about 3 percent said from a newspaper; and 1 percent learned about the park from the AAA guide.



The remainder said they learned about the park some other way.

Most of the park visitors, 77 percent, said it was not their first visit to the park.



Summertime fun on the waterslide.

Thirteen percent said they had visited the park more than 20 times. Eleven percent had been to the park 10 times. Fifteen percent each said they had visited the park two, four or five times. Visitors came throughout the day, but the noon to 2 p.m. slot was most popular with 47 percent saying they arrived during that time period. Another 20 percent arrived between 2 and 4 p.m. Seventeen percent arrived between 10 a.m. and noon, and 14 percent arrived between 4 and 6 p.m. One percent of visitors arrived for the last two hours the park was open, from 6 to 8 p.m.



A set of questions asked people what are their first, second and third favorite things to do in a park. Although some of the activities are not available at Eagle Island State

Park, such as camping, respondents rated ten activities. The top three were swimming, 32 percent; being with friends and family, 23 percent, and relaxing, 21 percent.

When asked, "What attracted you to the park?" the top choice was swimming, chosen by 22 percent. Another 11 percent said they were attracted to the park because it is close to home. About 13 percent said they came to be with friends, and about 10 percent said they were attracted by opportunities for picnicking. People were asked to rate the condition of the natural areas in the park. About 53 percent rated them "A" and about 34 percent rated them "B." A total of 3 percent gave the condition a "D" or "F."

The survey asked what people would like to have offered in the park. The top three were a playground, 23 percent; a volleyball area, 14 percent; and children's programs, 10 percent. All other choices received less than 10 percent. The top choices between 5 and 10 percent were more trails, ice for sale, horseshoe pits and boat rentals.

A set of questions asked about services provided by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation and Eagle Island State Park. Though two-thirds of the people who answered said they knew about annual park passes, 98 percent did not have a pass. More than 90 percent of visitors ranked park fees, "About right," with 7 percent saying they were, "Too high." Customer service was highly rated, with 73 percent giving it an "A" and 16 percent giving a "B." Fewer respondents were as highly satisfied with information they received from the park

or agency. About 57 percent gave the information an "A," and about 26 percent rated it a "B." A majority, 84 percent, said they feel safe while visiting the park. About 2 percent said they do not feel safe, and the remainder, about 15 percent, said they feel fairly safe.

of extended family. Four percent said the group was a single parent with children. Groups of friends accounted for 14 percent, couples for one percent and other at about 6 percent. Park visitors are from all income levels. Equal numbers of respondents, 23 percent, reported they are from two annual

Eagle Island State Park Annual Visitation

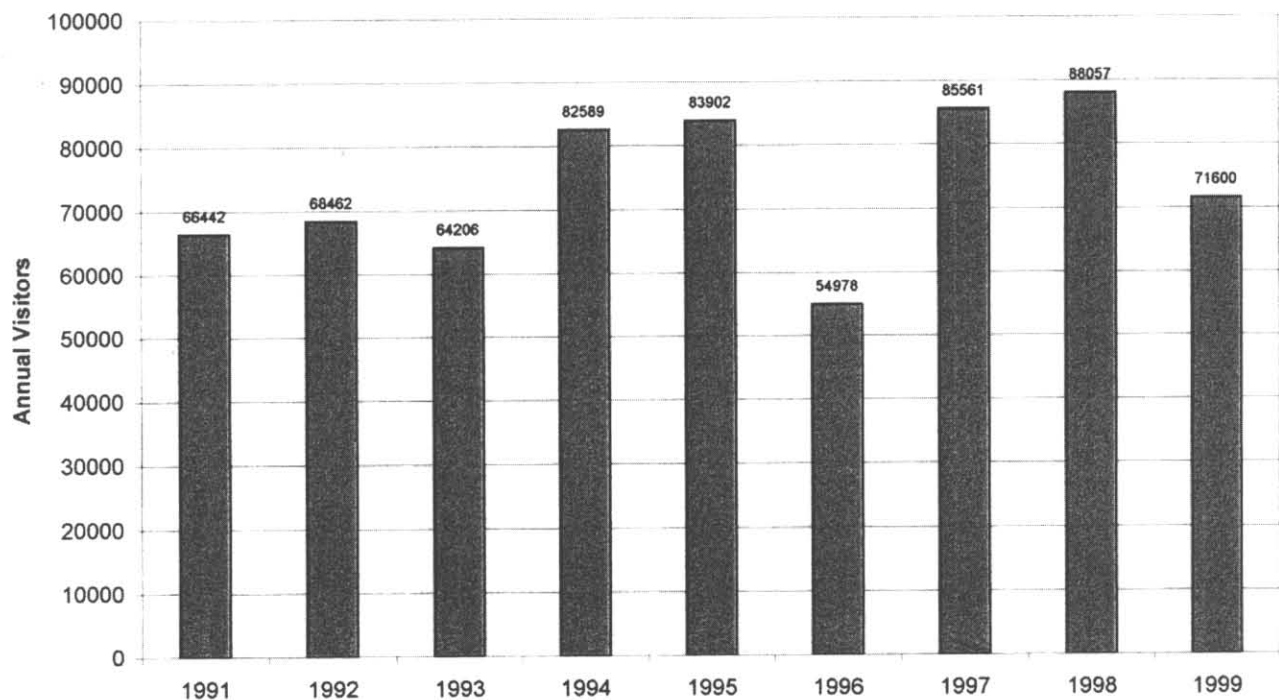


Fig. 4.5

The rest of the questions asked for information about the respondent. The average group size of the respondents was 4.3 people. The respondents and their party members included 54 percent females and 46 percent males. The park is attractive to families, with 44 percent describing their group as two parents with children. Thirty percent described their group as made up

income groups, \$35,000 to \$50,000 and \$50,000 to \$75,000. Twenty percent said their family's annual income is between \$20,000 and \$35,000. Nine percent each said they are in the \$10,000 to \$20,000 and \$75,000 to \$100,000 categories. The remainder, about 14 percent, reported incomes over \$100,000 annually.



HISTORIC VISITATION

Visitation at Eagle Island State Park has fluctuated during the last 10 years, based in large part on the weather and whether the

The number of visitors has generally been increasing at Eagle Island State Park. Natural occurrences, like an especially cool summer, seem to have affected visitation in some years. When the water slide was

Year	Number of Visitors	Comments
1991	66,442	20% more than 1990
1992	68,462	
1993	64,206	coldest summer on record
1994	82,589	water slide refinished; hot, dry summer; population growth
1995	83,902	gate closed three times when parking lot filled to capacity
1996	54,978	water slide closed all season; open through September for the first time
1997	85,561	first time open May through September; new water slide
1998	88,057	paddle boats available; lines at water slide
1999	71,600	canoes available; Roaring Springs Water Park opened in Meridian

Fig. 4.6

water slide is open. Except for the year the water slide was being replaced, visitation has ranged between about 64,000 and 88,000 people, with the trend being toward increased visitation.

closed, visitation dropped. Fig. 4.6 summarizes yearly visitation, with a key event or variable for the year if one was noted in the manager's annual report.



PROJECTED PARK VISITATION

The number of visitors likely will continue to increase as the population in neighboring cities and counties is projected to increase. In its current level of development, capacity of the park is reached when the parking lot is full. There is parking for about 550 vehicles. Fig. 4.7 shows a projected

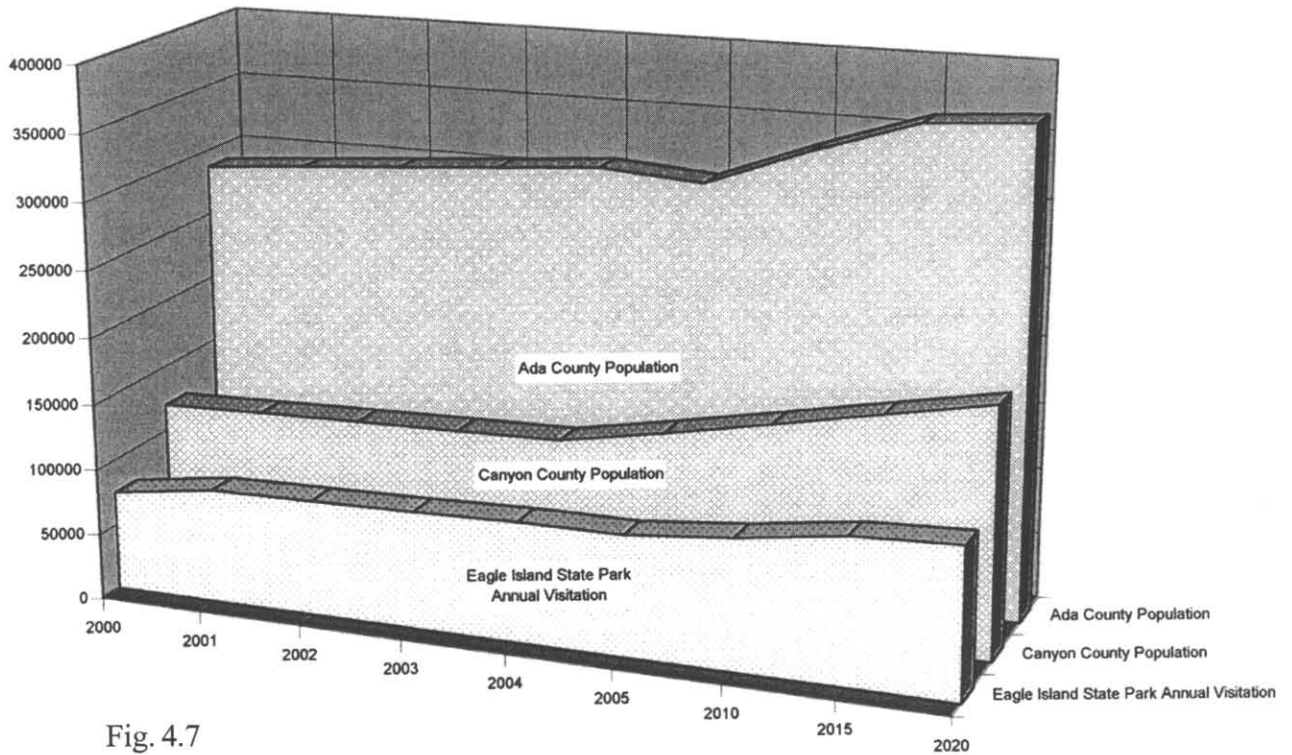


Fig. 4.7

increase in annual visitation to about 113,500 visitors in 2020. This projection is based on historic trends of population growth and assuming the current level of development. It is potential annual visitation.

